



## **Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee**

10:00 a.m., Wednesday, October 8, 2025

City Hall

Council Chambers

1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, SC

### **Public Comment:**

All citizens who wish to speak during the meeting must email their first and last name, address, and topic to Nicole DeNeane at [nicoled@iop.net](mailto:nicoled@iop.net) no later than **3:00 p.m. the business day before the meeting**. Citizens may also provide public comment here:

<https://www.iop.net/public-comment-form>

### **Agenda**

1. **Call to Order** and acknowledgement that the press and public were duly notified of the meeting in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.
2. **Approval of previous meeting's minutes – September 10, 2025**
3. **Financial Statements** – Finance Director Debra Hamilton
4. **Old Business**
  - a. Discussion and consideration of ATAX Grant Application – Lutheran Retreat Center, \$10,000
  - b. Discussion and consideration of future beautification projects
5. **New Business**

Consideration of budget overages:

  - IOP WSC YTD water & irrigation, \$425
  - JLG Enterprise YTD Trash pickup per contract, \$4,265
  - Charleston CVB – 30% Tourism Promotion Funds, \$133,005
  - BSO & Marina Parking Attendant, \$1
6. **Miscellaneous- next meeting: TBD**
7. **Adjournment**



## **ACCOMMODATIONS TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**10:00am, Wednesday, September 10, 2025**

**1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, SC**

### **MINUTES**

#### **1. Call to order**

**Present:** Rebecca Kovalich, Park Williams, Barb Bergwerf, Chrissy Lorenz, Margaret Miller, Rod Turnage, Mike Boykin (via Zoom)

**Staff Present:** Administrator Kerr, Director Hamilton

#### **2. Approval of previous meeting's minutes – July 9, 2025**

Ms. Bergwerf made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 9, 2025 meeting, and Mr. Turnage seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **3. Financial Statements**

Director Hamilton said the cash balance increased by 19.2% compared to the previous year, and the fund balance increased by 17.6%. Revenues amount to \$3.8 million, compared to a budget of \$3.7 million, primarily due to higher-than-expected State Accommodation Tax revenues. Director Hamilton informed the Committee that three expense items exceeded the budget and require approval. She specifies that "it's nothing wildly out of the ordinary, it's just the cost of doing business." They will be voted on at the next meeting.

She said FY26 expenses are tracking as budgeted so far.

Ms. Lorenz asked about the overage on the beach trash can pickup. Administrator Kerr explained that the overage comes from on-call work requests.

#### **4. Presentation – ATAX Grant Application from Elliot Cox, Coastal Retreat & Lutheran Retreat Center**

Mr. Elliot Cox, representing Coastal Retreat and the South Carolina Lutheran Retreat Centers, presented a grant application requesting \$10,000 for the repair of the facility's parking lot. Mr. Cox explained that his organization is a 501(c)(3) non-profit that hosts thousands of visitors annually, including religious groups, community organizations, and students. He estimated 95% of their guests are from out of town and out of state. They focus on group reservations and are booked a year in advance.

He mentioned that the parking lot is often the first impression for visitors, and its repair is a priority for safety and aesthetics. Mr. Cox indicated he has received an official quote for approximately \$17,000 and another verbal estimate of \$25,000. He said the parking lot is used

primarily for their guests at no charge, but they do sometimes offer paid parking to help fund their nonprofit.

## **5. Old Business**

### **a. Quarterly update and discussion with CVB – Chris Campbell and Ike High**

Mr. Campbell reported that the FY25 audit will be available to the Committee after it has been presented to the CVB board in October. They will be working with Director Hamilton on filing the TERC paperwork that is due in November.

Regarding performance, Mr. Campbell noted that strong momentum from the spring continued through the summer, offsetting losses from January to March due to weather and calendar shifts. Hotel performance data through July shows improvement. For seasonal rentals, demand surpassed last year's, and average daily rates (ADR) have continued to climb, with May being particularly strong. Demand across all the beaches outpaced last year and is still well ahead of pre-pandemic levels.

Mr. Campbell shared that national lodging forecasts show little to no growth for the next six months due to macroeconomic forces. However, the region generally outperforms the national average. Mr. Campbell describes the current economy as "K-shaped": the luxury and high-end segment continues to grow, while lower-tier hotels are feeling economic pressures. The booking window is compressing, with even corporate groups now booking less than 30 days out, creating volatility for property managers.

He reviewed some current initiatives including new content for the VRBO program, preparation for a travel trade show in November, the walkability study, the island rebranding project, creation of new video content, and conversation with the IOP Chamber on future collaborations. Mr. Campbell said he will look into local advertising of IOP and Wild Dunes to encourage staycations. He will also ask the CVB team for input on where the Committee could focus its beautification efforts.

### **b. Discussion of future beautification projects**

Ms. Lorenz suggested that the landscaping could be softened with native plants and the palm trees could be trimmed more often. She would like to see some work done to enhance the entry to the Marina.

Administrator Kerr described the scope of the walkability/mobility study currently being conducted by BCDCOG. There will be an open house for residents to review some maps and offer ideas on October 20 at the Recreation Center. The ATAX Committee will review the recommendations from that study and pull out a few to focus on. He said he will reach out to BCDCOG to include the Committee in the discussions.

## **5. New Business**

**6. Miscellaneous Business**

The next meeting of the ATAX Committee will be Wednesday, October 8, 2025 at 10am.

**7. Adjournment**

Ms. Bergwerf made a motion to adjourn, and Ms. Lorenz seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 11:03am.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole DeNeane  
City Clerk

**City of Isle of Palms**  
**State Accommodations Tax**  
**Balance Sheet**  
**as of September 30, 2025**

	9/30/2024	9/30/2025
CASH @ TRUIST	\$ 74,258	\$ 243,401
CASH @ SC LOCAL GOVERNMENT INVESTMENT POOL	4,863,458	5,433,015
ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE	7,405	11,263
AMOUNTS DUE FROM OTHER FUNDS	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>4,945,122</u>	<u>5,687,678</u>
ACCOUNTS PAYABLE	15,080	(1,705)
AMOUNTS DUE TO OTHER FUNDS	<u>84,172</u>	<u>-</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES	<u>99,252</u>	<u>(1,705)</u>
FUND BALANCE Beginning	4,893,009	4,893,009
Excess Revenues Over/(Under) Expenditures	(47,140)	(65,502)
FUND BALANCE	<u>4,845,869</u>	<u>5,689,383</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & FUND BALANCE	<u>\$ 4,945,122</u>	<u>\$ 5,687,678</u>

**City of Isle of Palms**  
**State Accommodations Tax**  
**Revenue Statement for the 3 Months Ending September 30, 2025**  
**Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2026**

Date		Description	Total
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**Revenues**

September Quarterly Payment from State  
December Quarterly Payment from State  
March Quarterly Payment from State  
June Quarterly Payment from State

YTD Interest Income 56,783

**Grand Total**

56,783

**State Accommodations Tax**  
**Detailed Expense Statement for the 3 Months Ending September 30, 2025**  
Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2026

		<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>B+C-A</i>
Vendor	Description	Actual Expenditure	FY2026 Budget	Committee Approved	(Over)/ Under
<b>Public Restroom Operations</b>					
Dominion	YTD electricity for restrooms	141	750		
IOP WSC	YTD water & irrigation	3,180	12,500		
Blitch, Steady Hands Painting, AAA Fence Co. etc.	YTD maintenance	750	45,000		
Port City Paper	YTD paper & cleaning supplies	2,580	11,000		
SCMIRF/Wright Flood	YTD property & flood insurance	2,417	10,940		
Irrigation By Design	YTD Backflow Testing		80		
Quality Touch Cleaning	YTD cleaning	6,907	40,000		
IOP Payroll	YTD attendant	6,681	30,465		
		22,655	150,735		128,080
<b>Beach Barrel &amp; Front Beach Business District Trash Pickup</b>					
JLG Enterprise LLC	YTD trash pickup per contract				
		28,673	85,000		56,327
<b>Irrigation at Breach Inlet Sign</b>					
IOP WSC	YTD irrigation				
		42	400		358
<b>Non- Capital</b>					
Maintain Benches at Parks			5,000		
Beach Wheelchairs and Maintenance			1,000		
		-	6,000		6,000
<b>Beach Trash Barrels</b>					
Beach Trash Cans		-	7,500		
		-	7,500		7,500

**State Accommodations Tax**  
**Detailed Expense Statement for the 3 Months Ending September 30, 2025**  
Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2026

		<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>B+C-A</i>
Vendor	Description	Actual Expenditure	FY2026 Budget	Committee Approved	(Over)/ Under
<b>IOP Promotions &amp; Events</b>					
	Connector Run	7,500	7,500		
	Easter Egg Hunt		4,500		
	Music Events		4,500		
		7,500	16,500		9,000
<b>Programs &amp; Sponsorship</b>					
	Provisional Events Approved By Committee		75,000		
	July 4th Fireworks	22,707	51,000		
		22,707	126,000		103,293
<b>Charleston CVB - 30% Tourism Promotion Funds</b>					
	Charleston Area CVB 30% distribution for Sept Qtr				
	Charleston Area CVB 30% distribution for Dec Qtr				
	Charleston Area CVB 30% distribution for Mar Qtr				
	Charleston Area CVB 30% distribution for Jun Qtr				
	State Mandated 30% Transfer		1,007,081		
	CVB Quarterly Shared Payroll	7,559	34,000		
		7,559	1,041,081		1,033,522
<b>Tourism Promotion Funds</b>					
	City Hall's Visitor T-Shirt/Promotions	(8,074)	15,000		
		(8,074)	15,000		23,074
<b>Transfer to IOP Marina for 75% of Bond Debt Service</b>					
	Isle of Palms Marina Enterprise Fund		249,864	-	249,864



**State Accommodations Tax**  
**Detailed Expense Statement for the 3 Months Ending September 30, 2025**  
Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2026

		<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>B+C-A</i>
Vendor	Description	Actual Expenditure	FY2026 Budget	Committee Approved	(Over)/ Under

Police

Body Armor

	7,500	
-	7,500	7,500

**Capital Outlay**

**Police**

ATV

20,365

22,000

1,635

Speed Radar & Trailer

19,009

20,000

991

PSB Gate

6,000

6,000

Computer Server

-

18,000

18,000

39,373	66,000	-	26,627
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**Fire**

Thermal Imaging Camera

20,000

Rescue Boat

100,000

PSB Gate

1,850

6,000

1,850	126,000		124,150
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**Public Works**

Waterway Blvd Multi-Use Path

520,000

1/3 Rear Loader Garbage Truck

106,667

-	626,667		626,667
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**Recreation**

Reconstruct 2 Tennis Courts

65,000

Playground Equipment

20,000

-	85,000		85,000
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**Front Beach & Restrooms**

**State Accommodations Tax**  
**Detailed Expense Statement for the 3 Months Ending September 30, 2025**  
Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2026

		<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>B+C-A</i>
Vendor	Description	Actual Expenditure	FY2026 Budget	Committee Approved	(Over)/ Under
To Repair 4500 Linear Ft of Sidewalk			70,000		
Resurface City Owned Parts of Ocean Blvd			25,000		
		-	95,000		95,000
<b>Fire Dept Debt Service on 75' Ladder Truck</b>					
Truist Govt Finance	75' Ladder Truck - Principal		85,483		85,483
	75' Ladder Truck - Interest		6,431		6,431
		-	91,914	-	91,914
<b>Unexpended Projects/Miscellaneous</b>					
GF-Public Relations & Tourism Coordinator			42,101		
GF-Firefighters (3)			294,127		
GF-Paramedics (3)			339,470		
GF-Police Officer (2)			212,427		
GF-ALL Beach Service Officers & Marina Parking Attendant			60,027		
GF-Police Overtime			20,000		
GF-SRT Coordinator			79,224		
GF-Code Enforcement Officer			80,077		
MF-Beach Run Sponsorship			3,000		
MF- Marina Green Space			50,000		
Miscellaneous			1,000		
		-	1,181,453		1,181,453
<b>Grand Total</b>		122,286	3,977,614	-	3,613,104

<b>Event/Project Name</b>	Coastal Retreat Parking Lot Repair
<b>Organization sponsoring event &amp; contact person</b>	Coastal Retreat Center; Rev. Mary M. Finklea
<b>Address</b>	2101 Palm Blvd, Isle of Palms, South Carolina 29451
<b>Phone</b>	(843) 687-7425
<b>Email</b>	pastorfinklea@bellsouth.net
<b>Amount request</b>	\$10,000.00
<b>Date funds needed</b>	10/31/2025
<b>Location of project/event</b>	Parking Lot of 2101 Palm Blvd
<b>Event/project description</b>	Creating a welcoming, safe entry to Coastal Retreat makes for a more hospitable experience for tourists and visitors. Our parking lot currently includes cracks and potholes that do not reflect the welcome we would like to extend. Doing this project in the late fall and early winter is better both for the construction process and more convenient for our guests.
<b>Tourism Impact</b>	Coastal Retreat hosts hundreds of overnight visitors every year, which contributes to our IOP economy along with numerous guests who use our parking lot on a daily basis. Having an improved parking lot benefits local day guests as well as out of town visitors that stay for a weekend or a week. Many of our retreat programs bring in out of state guests as well as folks from within South Carolina. We continue to promote civic and cultural gatherings that bring people together. Our facility served as an impromptu Town Hall during Hurricane Hugo, and throughout the years during emergency weather, we have been a trusted partner for the community. It might not seem as if local community support and tourism are directly related, but I believe they are. Strengthening our local engagement also bolsters a healthy, resilient community that can welcome others.
<b>Insurance &amp; Indemnification</b>	Yes